



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Alexandria, Virginia  
December 17, 2004

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Ernesto Romero, and Rodney Hash were sentenced today in Alexandria federal court for their involvement in two separate tax evasion schemes to avoid paying employment taxes to the Internal Revenue Service.

Ernesto Romero, owner and operator of Angelo's Incorporated in Sterling, Virginia, was sentenced by United States District Court Judge Leonie M. Brinkema to 18 months in prison, a fine of \$4,000 and restitution in the amount of \$ 243,167.67. Romero failed to collect and pay over to the Internal Revenue Service approximately \$243,852 for the years 2001 through 2003. Romero paid his employees in cash to evade paying federal payroll taxes which he knew he was required to pay. This case was part of a project called "Operation Financial Compliance" and was investigated by the Annandale High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Money Laundering Initiative (HIDTA).

Rodney Hash, a resident of Manassas, Virginia, was sentenced to five months in prison and restitution in the amount of \$37,222. Hash provided his employer, AAA Trash and Recycling Removal Service, with false W-4 forms claiming to be exempt from federal income tax withholdings in an attempt to prevent his employer from withholding federal income taxes from his paycheck. Hash evaded the payment of more than \$30,000 in taxes during calendar years 2000 through 2002.

The IRS urges all businesses to resist the temptation to become involved or victimized by unlawful schemes to avoid paying taxes.

These cases were investigated by special agents of the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Dana J. Boente, John Klein, Daniel J. Grooms, and Special Assistant United States Attorney Jessica Lombardo.

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